

CAPSULE SUMMARY

MIHP Number: BA-2634

Approximate construction date: 1862

Town vicinity: Essex, Maryland

Access: Private

Brief description of the resource:

The two-story, side gable farmhouse is cross gabled at the front and rear and has a one-story porch that wraps around the north, east and south sides. A one-story, gabled hyphen at the west (rear) connects to a small one-story, gabled wing. The house is built in a very spare Gothic Revival style. The size of the main portion of the house is approximately 39'-6" by 30'-0".

Summary Statement of Significance:

Walnut Grove is a mid-19th century farmhouse eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Design/Construction because it embodies the distinctive design characteristics of a simple Gothic Revival style. It appears that the current house was built circa 1862 by Scott Wilhelm on the brick foundation of a house built circa 1840 by Nicholas Merryman. Since there were few buildings constructed before 1840 on the Back River Neck peninsula, it is one of the earlier structures remaining in the area. Although the exterior decorative detailing is limited, the style of the house generally follows the recommendations of A. J. Davis for Gothic Style rural houses in his 1837 book *Rural Residences*. A. J. Downing further popularized the use of Gothic Style elements in his writings and extensive lectures. On the farmhouse these Gothic elements include steeply pitched, centered cross-gables with lancet windows in the gable ends, two-over-two paired windows at the second floor, and a one-story wrap around porch.

The other 11 structures on the site were built in the mid-20th to late-20th century and are not of cultural significance. Due to the lack of archeological or architectural significance of the balance of the site, only the area containing the farmhouse is included in the nomination.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES**Maryland Historical Trust**
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Walnut Grove (preferred), Walnut Point

and/or common

2. Locationstreet & number Walnut Grove Road ☐ not for publicationcity, town Essex ☐ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Baltimore

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners.)

name Carrie G. Buedel & Grace B. Robbins c/o Frank Lidinsky

street & number 3410 White Avenue telephone no.: 410-426-3000

city, town Baltimore state and zip code MD 21214

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clerk of the Circuit Court of Baltimore County liber 6499

street & number 401 Bosley Avenue folio 762

city, town state Towson, Maryland

6. Representation In Existing Historical Surveys

title None (see Appendix A)

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. BA-2634

Condition
☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one
☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one
☒ original site
☐ moved

date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

SUMMARY

MIHP Number: BA-2634

Approximate Construction Date: 1862

Town Vicinity: Essex, Maryland

Access: Private

Brief Description of the Resource:

The two-story, side gable farmhouse is cross gabled at the front and rear and has a one-story porch that wraps around the north, east, and south sides. A one-story, gabled hyphen at the west (rear) connects to a small one-story, gabled wing. The house is built in a very spare Gothic Revival Style. The size of the main portion of the house is approximately 39'-6" y 30'-0".

Summary Statement of Significance:

Walnut Grove is a mid-nineteenth-century farmhouse eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Design/Construction because it embodies the distinctive design characteristics of a simple Gothic Revival style. It appears that the current house and wing addition were built circa 1862 by Scott Wilhelm on the brick foundation of a house built circa 1840 by Nicholas Merryman. Since there were few buildings constructed before 1840 on the Back River Neck peninsula it is one of the earliest structures remaining in the area. Although the exterior decorative detailing is limited, the style of the house generally follows the recommendations of A. J. Davis for Gothic Style rural houses in his 1837 book *Rural Residences*.¹ A. J. Downing further popularized the use of Gothic Style elements in his writings² and extensive lectures. On the farmhouse these Gothic elements include steeply pitched, centered cross-gables with lancet windows in the gable ends, two-over-two paired windows at the second floor, and a one-story wrap around porch.

The 11 other structures on the site were built in the mid-20th to late-20th century and are not of cultural significance. Due to the lack of archeological or architectural significance of the balance of the site, only the area containing the farmhouse is included in the nomination.

(Continued in Attachment Section 7, Page 1)

¹ A. J. Davis, *Rural Residences*, New York: New York University, 1837.

² A. J. Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses*, New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1850.

8. Significance

Survey No. BA-2634

Period	Areas of Significance	- Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Walnut Grove is a mid-19th century farmhouse eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Design/Construction because it embodies the distinctive design characteristics of a simple Gothic Revival style. It appears that the current house and wing addition were built circa 1862 by Scott Wilhelm on the brick foundation of a house built circa 1840 by Nicholas Merryman. Since there were few buildings constructed before 1840 on the Back River Neck peninsula, it is one of the earliest structures remaining in the area. Although the exterior decorative detailing is limited, the style of the house generally follows the recommendations of A. J. Davis for Gothic Style rural houses in his 1837 book *Rural Residences*. A. J. Downing further popularized the use of Gothic Style elements in his writings and extensive lectures. On the farmhouse these Gothic elements include steeply pitched, centered cross-gables with lancet windows in the gable ends, two-over-two paired windows at the second floor, and a one-story wrap around porch.

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: III.) Piedmont, Baltimore County, Hyde Park area

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): I) Rural Agrarian Intensification

Historic Period Themes: 2) Architecture

Resource Type: Buildings, archeological site

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use: Residence, farm outbuildings, and farmland.

Known Design Source: None

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. BA-2634

See Attachment 9, Page 1.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1/4 acres

Quadrangle name Middle River, MD USGS

Quadrangle

scale 7.5 minute

UTM References - do NOT complete UTM references

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verbal boundary description and justification

Parcel 233 Tax Map 97 located on Marlyn Avenue, Essex, MD 116.41 ac

list all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Ward Bucher, AIA (Inventory), Robert Van Rehns (Research)		
organization	Ward Bucher Architects	date	April 1999
street & number	3525 Quebec Street N. W.	telephone	(301) 926-2650
city or town	Washington	state	District of Columbia

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023

PS-2746

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

RESOURCE TYPE: circa 1862 farmhouse (contributing) and outbuildings (noncontributing)

Environment

The Walnut Grove site is located on Walnut Point on the Back River Neck southeast of Essex Maryland and adjoins the Back River. Walnut Grove Road extends southwest from Marlyn Avenue on the north through the middle of the property to the Back River on the south. On the north the property abuts Marlyn Avenue on the west side of Walnut Grove Road and rowhouses on the east side of the road. Twelve small vacation cottages are located off-site to the south between Walnut Point Road and the Back River. Deep Creek Middle School and private property abuts the site on the west side.

The 116.41 acre property contains 12 structures, i.e. 4 houses and 8 associated outbuildings, several of which have farming related functions. The site is nearly flat open fields and woods sloping down to the Back River. The farmhouse and shed outbuildings are clustered in the center of the site on the west side of Walnut Grove Road. Three small houses with outbuildings are clustered near the Back River on the east side of Walnut Grove Road. Late 20th century rowhouse development has occurred off-site to the east of the property.

Site

The farmhouse grouping is accessed from Walnut Grove Road via a pea gravel surfaced drive to the farmyard on the north side of the house (see attached sketch map). A sodded lawn is located on the east and south sides of the farmhouse. The cluster of the three houses, shed, and privies on the east side of Walnut Grove Road. Two of the houses are accessed by a dirt road from Walnut Grove Road. The third house is accessed by Walnut Grove Road itself. Open fields surround both the farmhouse cluster and the two easternmost houses. The house to the west is situated within a wooded setting.

Farmhouse

General description and character

The two-story, side gable farmhouse is cross gabled at the front and rear and has a one-story porch that wraps around the north, east and south sides. A one-story, gabled hyphen at the west (rear) connects to a small one-story, gabled wing. The house is built in a very spare Gothic Revival style. The size of the main portion of the house is approximately 39'-6" by 30'-0".

Room Arrangement

The main portion of the farmhouse has a center hall with two rooms on each side on the first and second floors (see attached floor plan). The unfinished basement is L-shaped and extends under the kitchen in the northwest corner and the center hall. A winder stair extends from the second floor hall up to two attic rooms with sloped ceilings. (Continued in Section 7, Page 2)

The first floor contains a living room and kitchen on the north side and two rooms on the south side. The southwest room connects to the one-story hyphen leading to a single room in the rear wing. The second floor contains four bedrooms (one in each corner) and a bathroom over the entrance hall.

Foundations and Structure

The foundations of the house include a brick perimeter wall and interior brick piers. The west side of the foundation is reinforced on the interior with concrete. The piers support an 8"x 8" wood beam that supports 3" x 12" wood joists that are approximately 24" on center. The main basement floor is earthen. Typical interior framing is wood 2x4's. The 2x roof rafters have collar ties in the attic. Square wood box columns support the porches.

Facades

The original farmhouse has three bays on the east (front) and west (rear) façades and two bays on the north and south sides. The front and rear facades have a centered cross gable.

The east façade has a center six-panel wood door with heavy bolelection moldings and a four-light transom above it. The entrance door is flanked by four-over-four, square headed, double-hung windows. The second floor has three double two-over-two, square headed, double-hung windows. The attic level window in the gable end is a two-over-two, pointed, double-hung window.

The north and south facades each have two four-over-four windows on the first and second floors and a single pointed two-over-two window in the gable end. The north hyphen façade has a three-panel door with a four-light transom. The south façade of the hyphen has a four-over-four window and a batten door with a three-light transom. The west façade is similar to the east, with the hyphen attached on the south side and a bulkhead door to the main basement on the north side.

The north, south and west facades of the west wing each have a single four-over-four window. There is also a bulkhead door to the basement of the wing on the north side of the wing.

All windows have shutter hardware.

The farmhouse is faced with horizontal, flat-faced German siding (also known as drop siding or novelty siding) covered with asbestos cement shingles.

The porch has tongue-and-groove pine flooring, square columns and a board-and-batten ceiling. The columns have a heavy, rectangular abacus at the top and curved bolster brackets in the form of a flat shouldered arch.

Roofs and Chimneys

The steeply pitched gable roofs have asphalt composition shingles. Ogee shaped sheet metal gutters are located at the eaves of the one-story west wing. The porch has a low-slope shed roof with rolled roofing.

Two massive square brick chimneys are located at the ridgeline of the main house and a small brick chimney is located inside the west gable end of the rear wing.

Interiors

Typical floor finishes are earth in the basement, and 6" wide pine tongue-and-groove flooring on the upper floors.

Typical wall and ceiling finishes are flat, painted plaster on sawn wood lath. The typical door and window casing is a 4" wide, rectangular, wood molding with a peaked top over the doors. Typically the doors are four-panel, pine with white porcelain knobs and transoms at the hall doors. The interior of some closet doors indicates a grained finish that resembles oak.

The main stair has a single straight flight to the rear of the second floor hall. The rail of the main stair has simple, tapered balusters (two to a tread) and an oval shaped rail. There is a large turned newel post at the first floor level. A door from the front of the second floor hall leads to a steep winding stair to the attic.

Heating is supplied by a large, cast-iron, Woodland brand stove in the kitchen.

Simple slate fireplace mantels are located in the two first floor south rooms. The portion of the mantel over the top of the firebox opening is in the form of an extremely flattened Tudor arch.

With the exception of the kitchen cabinets and counters, and some bathroom fixtures, the interior appears to be largely unaltered since its construction.

Produce Shed

The produce shed is located on the north side of the farmyard and was constructed circa 1941. The building is a tall, one-story structure with a shed roof and double open doorways that face south. The building is approximately 27 feet by 30 feet and has a 27 feet by 12 feet open sided lean-to on both the east and west sides. The posts-in-the-ground support pole beams and rafters. The siding is vertical planks and the roofing is corrugated metal. The doorways were constructed to be large enough to accommodate a tractor-trailer backing in to load vegetables and have no doors.

The interior is unfinished and has an earthen floor.

Tractor Shed

The tractor shed is located at the rear of the farmyard and was constructed in the late 20th century. The building has a shed roof and is framed with steel columns and beams. The front of the shed is open and the sides, rear and roof are sheathed in corrugated sheet metal.

Storage Sheds

There are two small storage sheds located on the south (front) side of the Produce Shed that were constructed in the late 20th century. The first shed is 8 feet by 8 feet and has painted plywood siding and a gable roof with asphalt shingles. The second shed is 8 feet by 24 feet and has painted plywood siding and a shed roof with rolled roofing. Both sheds have plywood doors. The larger shed has aluminum sliding windows at the end walls.

Houses 2, 3, and 4

The three houses, located approximately 75 feet from the Back River, are nearly identical. For the purposes of this report, the west house is labeled House No. 4, the central house is labeled House No. 2, and the east house is labeled House No. 3. The three houses were built in the late 20th century, possibly in 1972 when a building permit was obtained.

Each house is a one-story, gable-roofed building with a hip-roofed, screened porch on the south (river) side. For House Nos. 2 and 3, the foundations are concrete block piers, the roofing is asphalt composition shingles, and the siding is asbestos-cement shingles. House No. 4 has a concrete block perimeter foundation with siding composed of asphalt composition shingle.

House no. 2 has six-over-six, doublehung, wood windows. House no. 3 has one-over-four, doublehung, aluminum windows. Both houses have aluminum awnings.

The proposed development plan is to raze the three houses fronting Back River. The foundation supporting House No. 4 may be adopted into the development plan.

East Shed

The east shed is located approximately 60 feet east of House No. 3. The shed is a one-story, shed-roofed building that is approximately 15 feet by 40 feet. No foundation was visible. The building has rolled roofing and German siding. A portion of the west and north walls have been covered with rolled roofing. The shed has two four-panel doors on the south side and six-over-six, doublehung, wood windows.

Privies

There is one privy approximately 40 feet north of House No. 2, a group of two privies 40 feet north of House No. 3, and one privy about 50 feet north of House No. 4. The privies are shed roofed and wood frame. The roofing is rolled roofing and siding materials include asbestos-cement shingles, clapboard siding, and asphalt composition shingles.

Photographs

1. East (front) façade of the farmhouse from Walnut Grove Road
2. Northeast view of farmhouse
3. Southeast view of farmhouse
4. Southwest view of farmhouse
5. North façade of rear wing
6. North façade of farmhouse
7. Front door
8. Porch column capital
9. Basement
10. Entrance hall
11. Kitchen
12. First floor southwest room
13. Second Floor northeast bedroom
14. Bathroom
15. Typical door casing
16. South attic window
17. Produce shed
18. Storage sheds
19. Tractor shed
20. House No. 2 from North
21. House No. 2 from South
22. House No. 3 from North
23. House No. 3 from South
24. Shed
25. Privy at House No.2
26. Privies at House No. 3

HISTORY AND SUPPORT
(Continued)

The farmhouse is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Design/Construction. The house has the distinctive characteristics of the Gothic Revival style as evidenced by a pattern of features common to this class of resources. The farmhouse has the massing and fenestration pattern of the Gothic Revival style but lacks much of the detailing espoused by A. J. Davis and A. J. Downing, such as drip molds and vergeboards. This simple variation of the style is appropriate given its remote location and the limited resources of the owner.

As noted in Appendix A, the exact date of construction of the farmhouse is unknown. Due to the fact that the L-shaped basement is considerably smaller than the main portion of the house and from the limited historical data, it appears that Nicholas Merryman built a house circa 1840 that was torn down to construct the existing farmhouse circa 1862.

(See Appendix A for ARCHIVAL AND BACKGROUND RESEARCH)

APPENDIX A:
ARCHIVAL AND BACKGROUND RESEARCH
(borrowed from the archeological survey)

The specific history of the Walnut Point property and vicinity is provided below. Included in this history is a chain-of-title representing land ownership between 1664, with the original land grant, and present (Table A-1).

Table A-1. Chain-of-Title for the Walnut Point Project Area

Date of Ownership	Property Owner
1664	Owen Spry (original Patent for Hunting Creek)
1698	Daniel Palmer (part of Anerson's Addition)
unknown	Charles Carroll of Annapolis (part of the Lancashire Furnace parcel)
1751	Principio Co.
1840	N. Merryman
1862	Scott Wilhelm
1892	N. Reiman
1924	Harry Hahnstock and trustees
1934	John Kealty Realty Co.
1936	Joseph Horacek
1941	Chester and Minnie Reather
1946	Mildred C. Nesbitt
1951	Mable F. Merryman
1957	Irving and Nellie Mae Stone
1962	Carrie Buedel
1983	Carrie Buedel and Grace B. Robbins

Walnut Point was part of Owen Spry's original land grant of 1664 known as "Hunting Creek." Daniel Palmer was the next landowner, and was known to have been a tobacco planter. Apparently, he lived on the land with several other men, each of whom was listed in the tax rolls. The first historically notable property owner was Dr. Charles Carroll of Annapolis. The exact

date of his purchase of the property is unknown, however, it is clear that he sold a parcel containing 8,200 acres, which included the project area, in 1751 (Baltimore County Deed Abstracts, Maryland State Archives). Note that the project area was situated in the southwest corner of the 8,200 acre tract. The next historically significant landowner was Principio Ironworks, occupying the property from 1751 to about 1810. It is not clear exactly when the company stopped operating, however, it is known that Principio Co. was the largest ironworks in the United States at the time of the Declaration of Independence, and produced a considerable portion of war material for the Continental Army.

During the War of 1812, the Battle of North Point was fought on the south side of the Back River, close to the Walnut Point study area. Perhaps the north shore was a landing area for some of the British troops who were eventually repulsed by Baltimore County residents. Those residing in the study area at the time of the war are unknown, but it is possible that they participated in the fighting. Several skirmishes occurred near Principio Ironworks, and some of the action might have taken place at Walnut Point itself. After the period of ownership by Principio Co., the land was reverted back to agricultural use with the planting of tobacco, and continued to be farmed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

A survey of historic maps revealed no permanent structures in or near the project area prior to 1840. The 1850 J. C. Sidney maps depicted a school located midway down the peninsula. Apparently, the school was a two-room structure on the site now occupied by the Cheery Day Nursery, and was perhaps built as early as 1840. The map also depicted a dwelling owned by Nicholas Merryman in the vicinity of the project area. Note that Nicholas Merryman owned the property containing the Walnut Point project area as early as 1840. The farmhouse currently standing in the Walnut Point study area is presumed to be the same house built by Nicholas Merryman around 1840.

Scott Wilhelm occupied Walnut Point in 1862 after Nicholas Merryman. Wilhelm's occupation is depicted on the 1877 G. M. Hopkins map. A document listed Wilhelm as a passenger of a ship arriving in Baltimore from Holland in 1826 (Passenger Manifests from the Port of Baltimore, 1800-1850 Abstracts). Apparently, he was four years old upon his arrival. This would have made him forty at the time of his purchase of the seven hundred acre parcel located along the Back River. According to census records, a Scott Wilhelm, listed as fifty-seven and head of a household, was a resident in Baltimore County in 1880.

The first Catholic church in the immediate vicinity of Walnut Point was Our Lady of Mount Carmel, built along Back River. Because the first baptismal records dated to 1887, perhaps the church was built prior to this time. Other churches in the area, including an Episcopal and Methodist church, actually predated Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Heritage Society of Essex 1969:7). The historic records from these two congregations were unavailable for examination.

In 1904, a fire raged in Baltimore, destroying a significant portion of the county's records. Five years later the town of Essex was first laid out as part of the suburban expansion of Baltimore City. A sewage processing plant was built at the mouth of the Back in 1911, almost immediately polluting the river (Martenak 1963:11). Hollywood Park, a large amusement complex built near

the town of Essex back in 1895, burnt to the ground in 1921 and remained abandoned thereafter. Around this time a yacht club was built on the site of a nineteenth-century shipyard located along the Back River. Gradual silting of the river, combined with the Depression of the 1930s, closed the shipyard area permanently. Ownership of the Walnut Point study area changed hands numerous times between 1900 and 1941 (Table A-1).

Eastern Rolling Mills merged with Industrial Stainless Steel in 1944, forming Easco. The company still remains a major employer in the area today. The Walnut Point property was probably owned by Chester and Minnie Reather at the time of the merger. Five years later the property was conveyed to Mildred C. Nesbitt. A fire in August of 1957 destroyed a significant portion of downtown Essex, inflicting permanent damage on the local economy. The year of the fire, the Walnut Point property was conveyed to Irving and Nelly Mae Stone.

Since 1962, the Walnut Point property has remained in the ownership of Carrie Buedel. With suburban development from the Baltimore Metro area reaching out over the county, the land surrounding the study area has been developed into town home communities, and the local economy has shifted to a commuter-based commercial district. With the Baltimore Beltway running within miles of the Walnut Point study area and commercial redevelopment planned for Essex, this trend is expected to continue well into the future.

The study area as it exists today contains one historic structure, i.e. a farmhouse; a work shed and numerous other modern, farming-related outbuildings; three cottages situated along Back River; and several sheds and outhouses associated with these cottages. The historic house and barn were listed on Wilhelm's 1880 tax assessment, along with several other outbuildings now nonexistent. Of the three cottages, only one was built under a Baltimore County building permit in 1972 (Baltimore County Land Records).

The contract purchaser has proposed developing the site as 158 single family houses on cul-de-sac loop roads connected to Walnut Grove Road. Demolition of all existing structures is planned.

January 12, 2000

Ms. Kimberly R. Abe
Baltimore County, Landmarks Preservation Commission
County Courts Building
401 Bosley Avenue, Suite 406
Towson, Maryland 21204

Re: Walnut Grove (BA-2634)

Dear Kim:

As you requested, I have reviewed the Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form for Walnut Grove (BA-2634) in Essex, prepared by Ward Bucher Architects in April 1999. I concur with the summary statement of significance that the property is potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Design/Construction. I have conducted my own assessment of the property's integrity and eligibility for listing in the Register, and outlined my findings below for your review.

The single-family dwelling illustrates distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural style and period, specifically the Gothic Revival style in the 19th century. Walnut Grove is representative of an important phase of architectural development, illustrating the popularity of a more vernacular or rural interpretation of the Gothic Revival that presented a picturesque mode within a natural landscape. Furthermore, the integrity of the building, although cosmetically deteriorated, is sufficiently intact to convey its significance under Criterion C.

Architecturally, the two-and-a-half-story wood frame dwelling embodies the picturesque qualities of the style. Elements include the pointed gables, steeply pitched roof, triangular-arched openings, wide overhanging eaves, and expansive porch with flattened arches, stylized square columns, and a board-and-batten ceiling. In form, the building is not high-style, rather it is characteristic of the rural domestic buildings erected during the first half of the 19th century as a result of numerous publications by A.J. Davis and A.J. Downing. As noted by Davis in his 1837 *Rural Residences*, rural Gothic Revival structures typically were symmetrical, often measuring three to five bays in width with equally spaced window openings. The stylistic embellishments of these rural buildings were limited to the steep pitch of the roof, wide porches, overhanging eaves, and applied ornamentation. By the middle part of the 19th century, Davis' rural Gothic Revival was more commonly applied to the larger county "villas" constructed for the middle class. Such is the case at Walnut Grove, a symmetrically pierced three-bay wide rural villa

situated on Back River at Walnut Point. On the interior, the building presents a symmetrical plan, ornamented with flattened Tudor arches over the entries and fireplace openings.

With regard to integrity, Walnut Grove retains the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic character. As defined by the National Register of Historic Places in "Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," the seven aspects of integrity are addressed as they pertain to the primary dwelling at Walnut Grove.

1. **Location** is defined as the place where the historic property was constructed. Complemented by setting, the location of Walnut Grove is important to understanding why the primary dwelling was constructed here. First, the building remains in its original location, it has not been moved. Second, the building was deliberately constructed in this rural location on the Back River in an effort to more effectively portray a Gothic Revival county villa of mid-19th century. *Therefore, Walnut Grove retains integrity of location.*
2. **Design** is defined as the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The design of Walnut Grove was the result of conscious decisions made during the construction of the primary dwelling and planning of the property. This includes such elements as the siting of the building along Back River in this rural setting, the picturesque interpretation of the Gothic Revival style as presented by Davis, and the wood frame construction of the structure and its lack of high-style ornamentation. Additionally, the property's design reflects the proportion, scale, and space planning of rural Gothic Revival style buildings from this period. The structure has been modified by the application of asbestos siding, however, this alteration in the original cladding material is viewed as reversible. *Therefore, Walnut Grove retains sufficient integrity of design.*
3. **Setting** is the physical environment or character of a historic property, including where it is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space. The setting of Walnut Point, as noted above, was intentionally selected for its ability to reflect the picturesque mode of the rural Gothic Revival. Thus, the historic physical features of this area are significant to the architectural interpretation of the building, particularly its rural environment and siting along Back River. This was compromised by the construction of numerous single-family dwellings in the 1970s and 1980s. However, these modern buildings are located closer to the banks of the river than Walnut Grove and are largely obscured from view by mature trees and stretches of open farmland. The vista to the river from Walnut Grove is sufficiently intact as historically presented, as the new dwellings are located to the south and north thus preserving a direct view westward to the river.

The siting of the agricultural resources within close proximity to the primary dwelling also reflects the rural nature of the property, which historically consisted of farmland.

However, with subdivided acreage to the north and northeast, Walnut Grove quickly becoming encroached upon. Thus, the rural vistas to the river and that immediately surrounding the primary dwelling are imperative to this historic setting. Twentieth century development has trespassed to neighboring river banks and inlets. This is particularly noticeable along Muddy Gut with the construction at Hyde Park and along Deep Creek at Fox ridge Park northeast of Marlyn Road. *Therefore, at Walnut Grove, enough of the essential physical features of the property are visible and convey their historic context.*

4. **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. Revealing the preference of the original owners and builder, the materials and technologies used in the construction of the primary dwelling at Walnut Grove are largely original. This includes the brick foundation, the four-over-four wood sash windows with wood sills, the square porch columns with bolster-like brackets on the wrap-around porch, the corbeled brick interior chimneys (one of which was been repaired), the large main entry door with molded panels and four-light transom, and the modest interior detailing found on the casings, mantels, and stair. Replacement materials include asphalt shingles on the roof and staggered asbestos shingles on the exterior wall surfaces. These materials are removable. *Thus, Walnut Grove retains sufficient integrity of materials.*
5. **Workmanship** is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. No documentation has been gathered to suggest the primary dwelling at Walnut Grove was the result of a trained architect or artisan. Rather, the property as a whole expresses the vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes of builders during the mid-19th century in rural Baltimore County. *Walnut Grove illustrates the aesthetic principles of a particular period within a regional context, and therefore, has integrity of workmanship.*
6. **Feeling** is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. This is the result of the presence of the physical features outlined above that, taken together, convey Walnut Grove's historic character. The property retains its original design, materials, workmanship, setting, and location and therefore relates the feeling of rural domestic life in Baltimore County along Back River in the mid- to late 19th century. *Therefore, Walnut Grove has integrity of feeling.*
7. **Association** is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. Although the original occupant of the primary dwelling at Walnut Grove, Scott Wilhelm, has been identified, no documentation has been gathered to indicate his sufficient importance locally, regionally, or nationally. Nor have any significant events or activities occurred on the property. *Thus, Walnut Grove does not present integrity of association.*

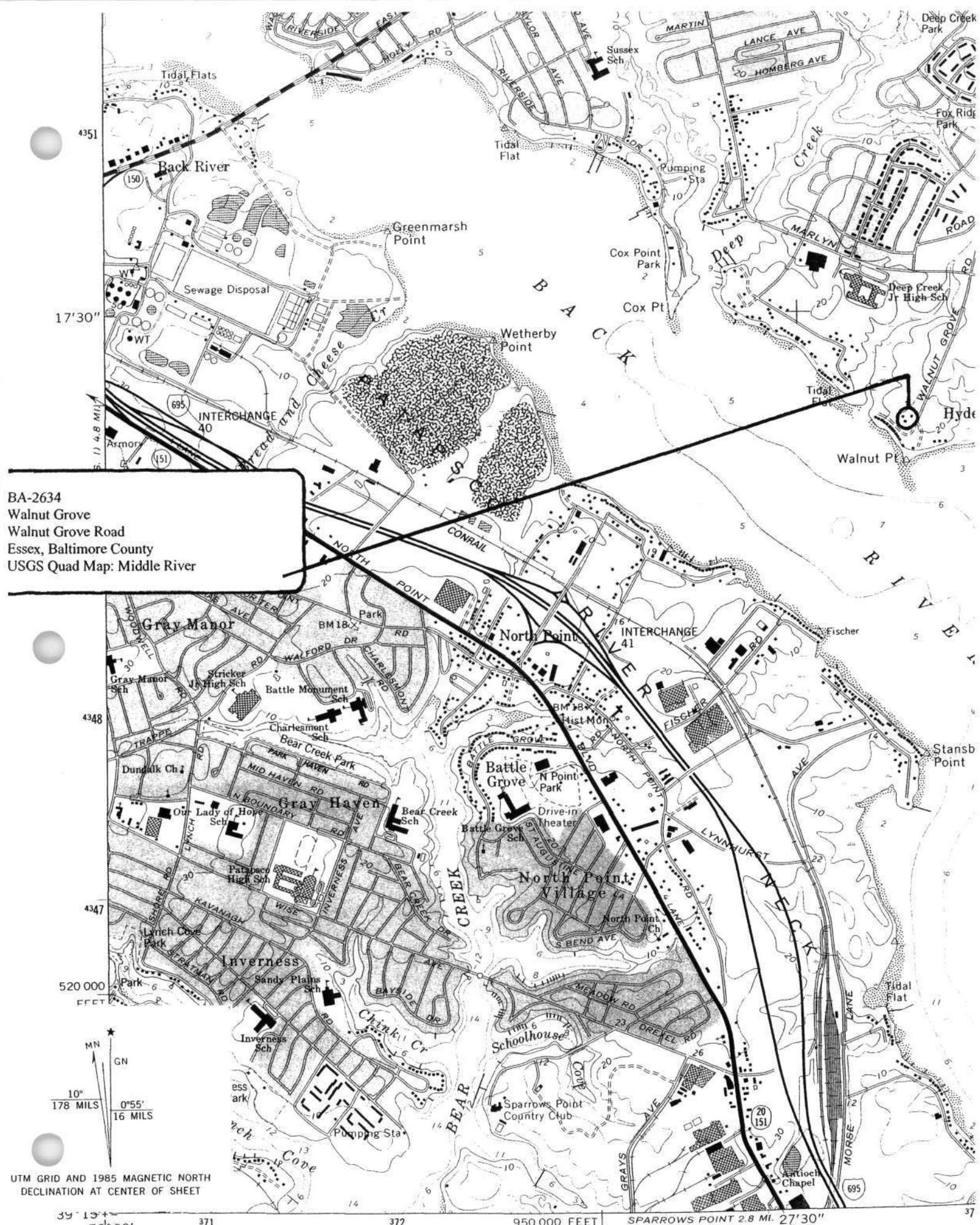
Comparatively, Walnut Grove possesses the characteristics required to represent the context in which it was originally constructed. Representative of rural Gothic Revival architecture, the building appears to have been one of the earliest domestic resources constricted on the Back River Neck peninsula. J.C. Sidney's *Map of the City and County of Baltimore*, published in 1850, notes that the property was improved by Nicholas Merryman (as noted in the MHT Form). Merryman was one of only fifteen property owners recorded on this 1850 map on Back River Neck peninsula, west of Back River Neck Road. The foundations of this earlier structure are believed to have been incorporated into the present building. Furthermore, G.M. Hopkins' *Atlas of Baltimore County* documents that Scott Wilhelm's Walnut Grove is the only building located on Back River Neck peninsula between Muddy Gut and Deep Creek in 1877. Hopkins *Atlas* indicates just thirteen of the fifteen properties documented by Sidney in 1850 are extant in 1877. The comparison of these two maps alone suggests Walnut Grove is significant as a rare, extant example of a mid-19th century property intentionally located on the banks of the Back River.

Additionally, the current database maintained by the Baltimore County Planning Department does not include a property like Walnut Grove. Although within District 15 (historically part of District 12) a substantial number of historic properties have been recognized, these resources overwhelmingly represent different areas and periods of significance than that of Walnut Grove. For example, the fourteen domestic properties in the database date primarily from the 18th century to the early 19th century (1725-1832) and from the late 19th century to the second quarter of the 20th century (1870-1920). It appears that the New Todd House (BA-1390) on Old North Point Road is the only residential resource contemporary to the house at Walnut Grove. This 1850-1875 dwelling, however, reflects the late Victorian era, rather than the early.

Thus, the defined essential physical features significant to Walnut Grove include the rural setting, the primary dwelling and its associated outbuildings, and the stylistic elements presented in the design and workmanship of the building. As noted above, these features are intact and visible enough to convey their significance. Therefore, I have determined that Walnut Grove is sufficiently intact to relay its local and regional context as a rare example of a property type, and embodies ample integrity of reflect its design and construction as defined under Criterion C. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional documentation or clarifications. I would be happy to assist you if I am able.

Sincerely,

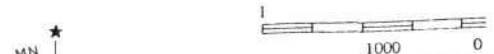
Laura V. Trieschmann
Senior Architectural Historian



BA-2634
Walnut Grove
Walnut Grove Road
Essex, Baltimore County
USGS Quad Map: Middle River

UTM GRID AND 1985 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

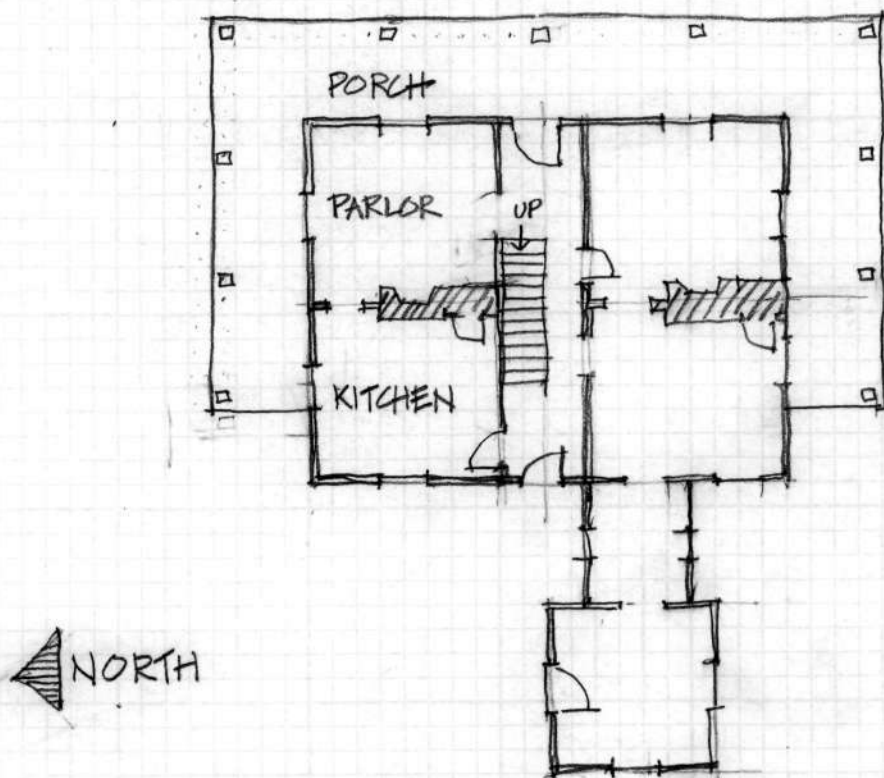
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial



BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE, ESSEX, MD

CA. 1862



1ST FLOOR PLAN

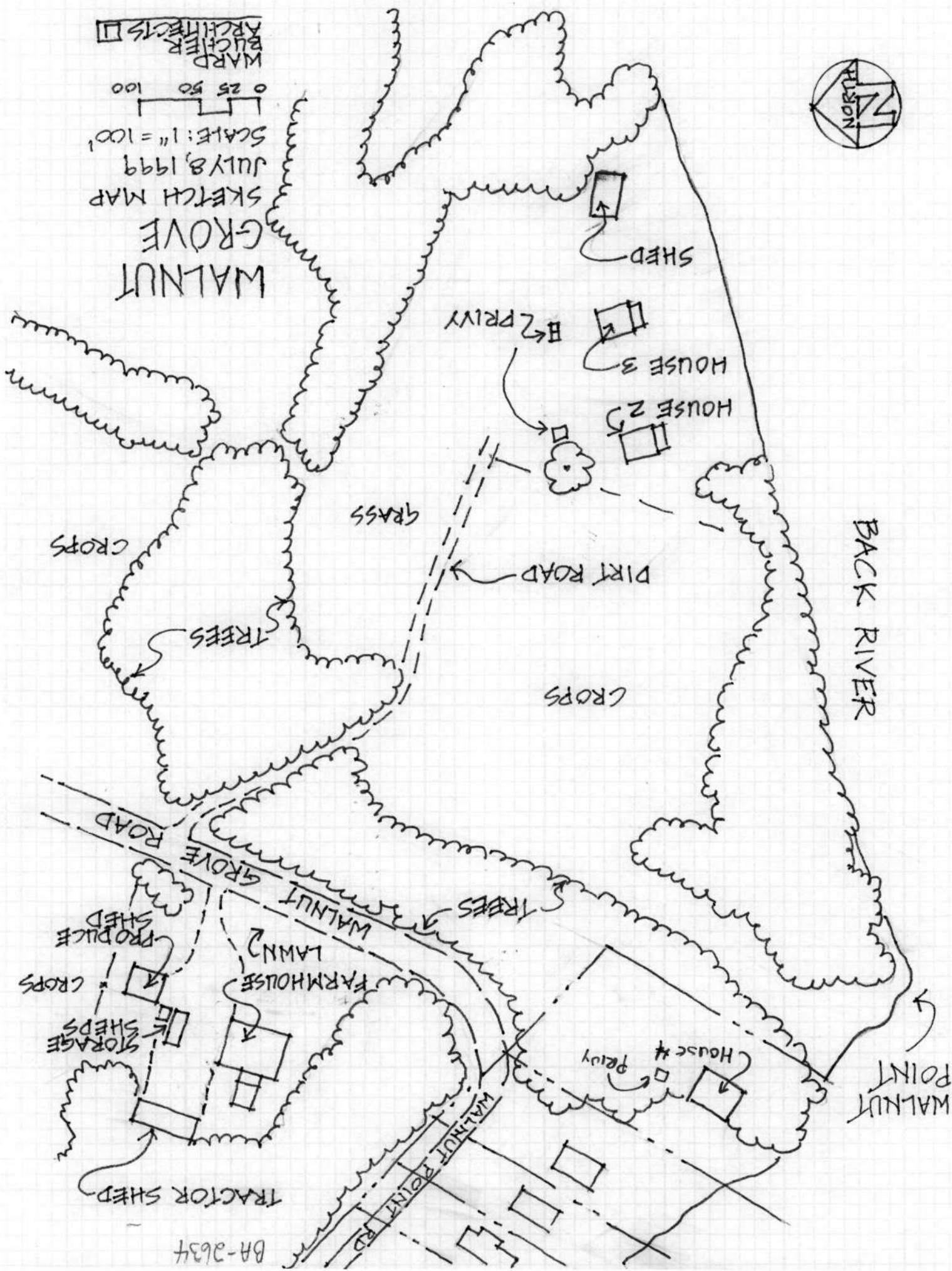
NOT TO SCALE

SKETCHED BY WARD BUCHER, AIA



WARD
BUCHER
ARCHITECTS
SCALE: 1" = 100'
0 25 50 100
JULY 8, 1999
SKETCH MAP

WALNUT
GROVE



BA-2634

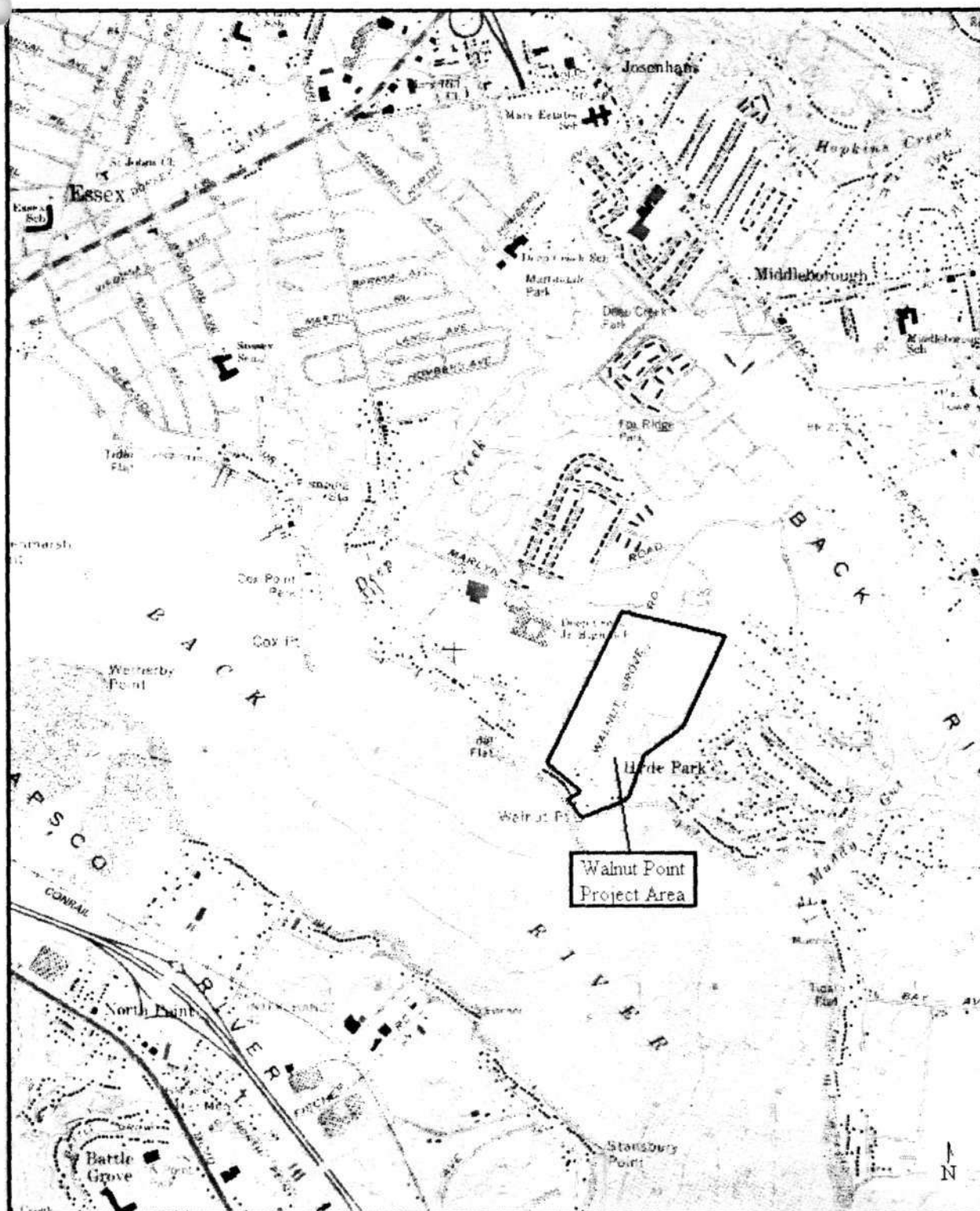


Figure 2-2. Location of the Walnut Point Project Area on the Middle River, Maryland U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle Map



① BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE: MD SH P3

EAST FACADE FARMHOUSE

S022 -1 T00261 P023



② B4 - 2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE: MDSHPO

NE VIEW OF FARMHOUSE

S022 -1 T00332 P035



③ BL-2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES: MDSHPO

SE VIEW OF FARMHOUSE

S022 -1 T00226 P040



④ BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPO

SW VIEW OF FARMHOUSE

S022 -1 T00325 P039



⑤ BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPO

N. FACADE REAR WING

S022 -1 T00313 P032



④ BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPO

N. FACADE

S022 -1 T00311 P033



① BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MD SHPO

FRONT DOOR

S022 - 1 T60241 P026



⑧ BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHTPO

PORCH COLUMN CAPITAL

S022 +1 100441 P007



⑨ BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPO

BASEMENT

5022NOR 100280 P008



(10) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPO

ENTRANCE HALL

5022-1 100291 P024



⑪ BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHIPCO

KITCHEN



(12) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ SHPO

1ST FL. SW. ROOM

S022 -1 T00271 P031



(13) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPO

2ND FL NE BEDROOM

S022NOR T00233 P025



(14) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPO

BATHROOM

S022 -1 T00154 P028



15 BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVES @ MDSHPD

TYPICAL DOOR CASING

S022 - 3 100240 P005



(16) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO

S. ATTIC WINDOW

S022 -1 T00336 P029



(17) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO
PRODUCE SHED

S022 -1 T00319 P036



⑫ BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO
STORAGE SHEDS

140d 018001 1 - 220S
S022 - 1 100310 P041



(19) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPC
TRACTOR SHED

S022 -1 T00673 P038



(20) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSAPO

HOUSE NO. 2

S022 -1 100358 P003



(21) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO
HOUSE NO. 2 FROM S.

5022 -2 T00236 P010



(22) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO
HOUSE NO. 3 FROM N.

S022 -1 T00271 P019



(23) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO
HOUSE NO. 3 FROM S,

S022 -1 T00303 P012



(24) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO
SHED FROM N.

200d 9800L 1+ 220S



(25) BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE

BALTIMORE, MD

W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MDSHPO

PRIVY @ HOUSE NO. 2

S022 -1 T00338 P005



(26)

BA-2634

WALNUT GROVE
BALTIMORE, MD
W. BUCHER

6/21/99

NEGATIVE @ MD SHPO
PRIVY @ HOUSE NO. 3

S022 -1 T00243 P020